THE BASEMENT STORE

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THE BASEMENT STORE

BUTLER BROTHERS

Exclusive Wholesalers of General Merchandise

NEW YORK CHICAGO ST. LOUIS MINNEAPOLIS DALLAS

A business with an income
at its heels. – *Cowper.*

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A Proposition to YOU

EVERY merchant wants more profit—and can get it.

None—certainly not you—will admit he has reached the limit of his or his store's selling power.

"If," said a big dry goods man recently, "I could sell my customers 75 per cent even of the things it is to their best interest to buy from me—!"

If he only could! That's the point. He needs more volume, great though the volume of his trade is now. He leads his town in sales, but there is a big percentage of profitable trade he does not get. If he could get this—with his present investment, and no increase in room or expense—well, you don't need us to tell you the answer.

You doubtless are right if you size up YOUR business as this man did. For practically every store IS capable of bringing in more business. Few, if any, stores have ALL their profit-getting qualities realized.

It stands to reason that the more people you can bring to your store the larger your volume will be. It also is an altogether sane proposition that the more volume you have with the same investment, the same room and the same expense the greater will be your profits.

You are a successful merchant. You know dry goods. You know values. You know how to conduct a store so that the women will patronize you. You are getting a satisfactory trade and are making money.

But the chances are, your business has not reached the stage of pure cream profits—the "just a little more" kind, the profits that come without being bought by expensive advertising or forced by undue expansion either of room or investment. To get these returns you have got to get more people into your store. No matter how many you have, you need more. No store ever gets big enough to be able to disregard the pure cream profits.

What has interfered heretofore with your landing this additional trade?

Simply this:

Many people have the idea that the average retail merchant is charging them too much for the things he sells them. This element is composed of the shrewder kind of consumers. Impelled either by the promptings of thrift or financial limitations they study ways and means of possible saving of even a few cents in the things they buy. This

causes them to shop around. It makes their trade unstable. It influences them, even in towns as large as yours, to buy from the retail mail order houses. They do not center their trade at your store.

If your customers are like those of the average dry goods store, this thrifty element is large enough to prevent you from getting a large part of the pure cream profits that you may as well have.

What is the answer?

You need a department which will expend 100% of its energy in shouting "PRICE," giving strong values for less money, and *proving to people* in a positive, affirmative and concrete way that money can be saved by buying at your store.

The way to give out this message—to drive it home so it will stay—is to have a STORE IN YOUR BASEMENT, to advertise it, believe in it, fight for it, just as you would if it were your whole establishment.

The most successful dry goods and department store retailers of the country—among them the highest class and most conservative—have adopted the basement idea.

What have they found?

They have found that the basement not only pays a profit, but that its natural advertising and pulling power brings trade to the higher priced departments of the store that otherwise would have gone elsewhere. Advertising the whole store and paying a better profit, investment considered, than any other department—this has, in many more cases than one, been the story of successfully conducted basements in big dry goods stores.

Marshall Field for years opposed the basement idea. He feared it would have a cheapening effect and lessen the dignity of his great retail establishment. But the very genius of Marshall Field finally enabled him to look ahead—to pierce the mists of doubt and what in some cases might be called foolish pride—and to see in a basement store a possible solution of how the big dry goods store could get the pure cream kind of profits. He found there was profitable trade he was not getting. And he set about to get it.

So Marshall Field started his basement. He could see what others could not see. Yet not even he foresaw the tremendous things that the basement was to accomplish for Field's store. Today the basement is the biggest thing that Field's have. It is a dollar-bringing refutation of the erroneous argument that a high class dry goods store cannot attract popular trade.

Go into Field's basement at any hour in the day and you find it jammed with eager buyers. It is jammed because things are being sold there *at a price*. And for every dollar of profit that this greatest of retail store basements brings in, at least 100 cents' worth of the best kind of advertising any store ever had is given the other departments.

To you, Mr. Merchant, we are today bringing this basement store proposition. Yon can win with it. You can get pure cream profits with it. Using it, you can bring the additional people to your store that will put your net returns where they ought to be.

If you will match your time against ours for a few minutes we believe we can show you where a basement store is the thing for YOU.

If you have started a basement and it is not doing what it should do, we think we can tell you what is the matter with it and show you how to place it upon a lasting and firm foundation.

(From Photograph taken for Butler Brothers.)

HOMEGOODS IN ONE OF THE WORLD'S BIGGEST RETAIL STORES.
Thousands of People Buy Here Every Day with Nickels, Dimes and Quarters.

A BASEMENT store is a place where people can buy goods for less.

It is a part of a store's selling machine that can be made yield an attractive net profit in itself and add to the net profit gained by all other branches of the store. We say "basement." If a basement is not available a similar department on an upstairs floor will respond to basement methods.

The dry goods store or the department store with the best basement invariably is the best and most profitable store in the town.

A basement store is a business bringer and a store rescuer. It can supply the ginger that can revive a listless or dying selling machine. And it can make the live, successful store more alive and more successful.

A merchant in a good sized Northern city had a department store of 75 feet front and three floors high. The main feature of his stock was dry goods. He featured women's ready-to-wear and had a fairly complete children's department. He sold shoes and had a grocery stock. His basement was used for overflow sales and for holiday goods.

He was strongly urged to utilize this basement for a part of his everyday selling. He steadfastly refused, saying this would be a waste of money and effort. He insisted he wanted to use the basement during the Fall for selling toys merely to draw the crowd. He refused to allow himself to see that he could use the basement to draw the crowd during the whole year by selling toys at one time, enameledware at another and seasonable house furnishings and other merchandise from month to month—in fact, cause something lively to be doing all the time.

Not until the panic of 1907 had squeezed the life nearly out of his store did he incline his ears to the hearing and absorbing of truths relating to the basement store. His store was sinking and he needed something to throw out the life line to it.

He inquired what would be the minimum amount of stock he could put into the basement to stir up business. It was suggested that $1,500 invested would do the work. He said this was simply out of reason, because he did not have that much cash and he refused to take advantage of his line of credit to that amount. When he finally got down to net he agreed to purchase $565 worth of Homegoods—mostly 5, 10 and 25 cent items—and to move down from upstairs about another $500 worth of dry goods and notion items which he could sell for ten cents.

Then he did what some straightaway dry goods men hesitate about doing. He gave his best window for displaying the special enameledware that he was going to sell on the opening day for ten cents. He mailed to his customers within the county a postcard calling attention to the five and ten cent line of goods he would handle in the basement and to the values that would be given on the opening day.

The basement opened on Saturday. Late Saturday night the merchant found to his great and joyous satisfaction that he had in his basement just the thing his store needed.

He discovered that he had taken in $303 in the basement that day. But his main pleasure was not in this. What delighted him most was that his grocery department had sold $250, his dry goods department $240, his ready-to-wear department $210, with miscellaneous sales of about $30. Thus the day's business amounted to more than one thousand dollars, which was more than he was in the habit of taking in even during the holiday season.

This merchant immediately saw the basement not only would be a self-sustaining feature of his business, but would be a medium for disposing of many other items which the other departments could not move. This was demonstrated two weeks later. He had in his store thirteen dozen kimonos. He had bought them because they were $3.00 or $3.25 merchandise and were offered him at $2.25 a dozen—the old, old story of buying too much just because he could get a price. He had been unable to dispose of these kimonos upstairs at any price.

So he built a special booth in the basement. The kimonos were scattered helter skelter about the booth and attractive show cards read:

"Special While They Last, 50c Kimonos 19c."

One of the brightest young women clerks wearing one of the garments herself was placed in charge of the booth. Every one was sold that afternoon. The merchant got all his money back. Better than all, he started one hundred or more women talking about his basement and the bargains they were getting there.

(From Photograph taken for Butler Brothers.)

BASEMENT STORE IN A CITY OF 20,000.

This Stock Turned Eight Times Last Year, Besides Advertising the Whole Store.

Get one hundred good talkative women to spreading around a town the excellence of your store and its value-giving powers and you have some worth while advertising.

This basement proved such a trade-puller from the very beginning that the owner conceived the idea of making it the trading center of the town. He put in charge of it the very best man he had in his business—his dry goods buyer. What was the result?

The basement did a business of $22,000 the first year!

He attained success because his basement had variety, because it featured things at a price and because he followed certain fundamental laws of basement store activity that we are going to tell you about on the succeeding pages.

The basement store, to reach its highest measure of efficiency, must have variety—a moderate quantity of each of many lines rather than large quantities of a few.

Many basements feature Homegoods exclusively and some of these are very successful. This, however, is not our idea of a real basement store, although we may as well confess in the beginning that one of the objects of this booklet is to sell you Homegoods for your basement.

Step down the stairs into one of these exclusive Homegoods basements. From the

standpoint of a merchandise display, what you see there pleases you. Table after table of attractive china, much of it high priced; more tables of cut glass; then crockery, glassware and a showing of enameledware and tinware—this is the general lineup.

Such a line-up is not the kind that can do its best for the store, because it lacks variety. It may do well, but its profit-bringing and advertising possibilities are limited.

A basement store may just as well be altogether successful. It CAN be if it is conducted as a store and not as a department of limited scope.

The ideal basement store is one which has a sufficient stock of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods to give the whole thing blood and bone. This line of goods through its great and constantly growing value-giving power imparts an atmosphere of low price and high value to the whole establishment. Around these goods as a nucleus should be built a complete store of the lower priced articles in your regular dry goods line. It will be found good business also to put in the regular basement stock a number of lower priced lines in dry goods specialties such as a *full line* of 10-cent hosiery, women's 10-cent vests, 10-cent ribbons, laces and embroidery, towels and similar lines. You can sell three times the quantity of these in your basement that you now are selling upstairs.

Thus the basement would give you an outlet for the goods upon which for any reason you might want to reduce the price. Also —and this is the most important of all—it would give you a profitable trade in the other lower priced lines which you do not sell up stairs. This is business that you would not get at all in the usual course of events, because you do not have the goods with which to get it.

Remember, there is much business to be gained from these lines. Don't look upon them lightly. Don't forget that nickels and dimes built the tallest office building in the world.

Then there is something almost magical in the advertising power of the numerals, 5, 10 and 25. The people have been trained by the five and ten-cent stores into knowing that nickels and dimes buy something worth while. When they see, for instance, a big window filled with ribbon, lace and embroidery for five and ten cents a yard—such as the one illustrated elsewhere in this book—there immediately is impressed upon them the lesson of big value.

People are learning, and rightfully so, that nickels, dimes and quarters have a greater purchasing power, relatively speaking, than dollars. Hence, when you lay stress on nickels, dimes and quarters and the great values to be had for them in your basement you are talking to people in a language they can understand and are giving them a message they will welcome in a way that will be good for YOU.

These goods draw the people to the store. Once they get there, your battle is 90 per cent won. You not only are selling them something out of which you gain a profit, but you are actually getting paid for advertising your own store.

A BASEMENT SELLING POPULAR PRICED GOODS CAN MAKE MORE NET PROFIT, PER DOLLAR INVESTED, THAN ANY OTHER DEPARTMENT IN THE STORE. This is so because of the great volume of the business and the many turns of the stock. The profits may be smaller, but they are more numerous.

The dry goods man who does the most with his basement is the one who pushes the hardest on these smaller prices—despite syndicate store competition or any other kind.

How to Start

IN planning a basement store you should arrange to have some big feature as a central point of attraction, and build your other lines around it.

Careful study of the question and close observation of the experiences of many merchants who have been successful with basement stores has shown that this central feature is best provided for by a sufficient assortment of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods—home goods.

The success or failure of your basement will depend upon your ability to convince people that you can save them money. It is not enough to have reduced prices on certain lines and count on these to carry this conviction to the mind of your customers. You must have some concrete thing at which to point and be able to say from the very nature of the thing, "Behold a big value."

Then there is the question of your own profit to consider. A store can't thrive month in and month out on reduced prices. True, trade can be gained by this means. People can be pulled into the store, but the cost would be too great as a general proposition unless you were getting a real, living profit at the same time.

A line of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods in your basement properly pushed will give you the price advertising that your store needs. At the same time it will not represent a loss or a mere coming out even, but will leave a profit behind—a greater profit considering investment than any other line you have.

Watch your profits! Lack of sufficient profit is the rock upon which many a promising basement store has gone to smash.

A basement store proposition is a queer creature. It can either suck away the profits or raise them to a height they never before have attained and that they could not attain without the basement. The whole secret rests in the way the basement is managed and what is offered there for sale.

With 5, 10 and 25 cent goods in a basement properly purchased, properly displayed and efficiently advertised the profit part of your basement will be secure.

A LINE OF 5, 10 AND 25 CENT GOODS WILL PLACE YOUR BASEMENT STORE ON ITS FEET AND ASSURE ITS SUCCESS. Then whatever you can make out of the other lower priced lines that naturally will drift to the basement from other parts of the store will be so much extra. Also you will have an outlet for your surplus goods and can get rid of them without expense, because the cost of conducting the basement already has been more than provided for by your 5, 10 and 25 cent goods.

What do we mean by 5, 10 and 25 cent goods?

For basement store purposes these are the ideal items in this line:

Dry Goods Specialties
Hardware
Tinware
Enameledware
Cutlery
Woodenware
All-the-year Toys
Glassware
China and Crockery
Notions
Stationery
Toilet Articles
Candy

You will observe that we have put dry goods specialties first on the list. This is

eminently proper, because dry goods specialties should have the place of honor in any efficient selling machine such as you expect your basement to be. Dry goods specialties at a price will draw more people than any other line. They will yield a great volume of profit, because more of them are used in the every day life of the people. Opportunity to buy hosiery, underwear, lace, embroidery, ribbon and similar articles on the basis of ten cents or twenty-five cents means something that the average woman will not overlook. Give plenty of attention to dry goods specialties and have a sufficient supply of the other branches we have mentioned and then you will have a well balanced stock that will turn rapidly and bring you in many profits.

Your special attention is called, also, to the excellence of candy as a basement store line. The 5 and 10 cent and all priced variety stores would close rather than quit selling candy. It is one of their best branches of merchandise. It yields a real profit and at the same time helps popularize the store. Candy at 10 cents a pound, 10 cents a half pound, 10 cents a quarter pound is the way these merchants sell it. All this is merely another means of getting the much to be desired trade of the masses. If a good profit is to be gained by selling popular priced candy, why not sell it?

How much of an investment of strictly 5, 10 and 25 cent goods is necessary to equip a sufficiently stocked basement?

We have sold as low as $500 worth of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods to merchants for use in starting a basement store. They have supplemented this small investment by goods from other lines and thus have made a very respectable showing. From this figure the investment can be almost anything you want to make it. In our selling experience the average basement stock in 5, 10 and 25 cent goods for the good sized dry goods or department store has ranged from $500 as a minimum up to $5,000. The size of the stock must depend largely upon the amount of room you have to devote to basement selling. It is a grievous error to overcrowd your space, because this chokes up the selling activities and pulls down the profit through a lack of turns.

It is in the number of times 5, 10 and 25 cent goods turn rather than in the amount of stock on hand that the net profit rests. A merchant with $1,000 worth of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods turning his stock eight times in a year is making much more money than the one who turns $2,000 worth four times or $4,000 worth two times.

Watch the turn!

How much profit is reasonably to be expected from a well stocked and well operated basement store?

This depends on whether you are going to use your basement chiefly for advertising purposes or for both advertising and profit-making.

The greater part of a 5, 10 and 25 cent stock yields a fancy gross profit—well over 50 per cent on cost. The range of cost of staple 10 cent goods is from 65 to 92 cents per dozen. Of 5 cent goods, from 30 to 45 cents. Of 25 cent goods, from $1.50 to $2.25. Aside from leaders, one can usually figure on an average cost of about 40 cents per dozen on 5 cent goods, 80 cents on 10 cent goods and $2.00 on 25 cent goods.

The very life blood of the 5, 10 and 25 cent business is GIVING LEADERS—big values to draw the people in. As explained elsewhere in this book, you must sell many of these for cost or less, and they will pull your gross profit down.

The average basement store aims to

(From Photograph taken for Butler Brothers.)

BASEMENT CHINA, CROCKERY AND GLASSWARE SECTION.

Right Here Is the Town's Headquarters In These Lines—It's a Big Town, Too.

realize about 30 per cent on sales. In some of them which are run first for advertising and second for profit, the gross profit sinks as low as 25 per cent on sales.

Your gross profit will be higher or lower than 30 per cent on sales in proportion to the amount of price advertising you do. It depends on how hard you want to put on the screws—how much advertising you want the basement to produce for the rest of the store.

Remember, though, that even a basement run strictly for advertising purposes can be made to pay a profit. Suppose your lively and persistent use of price advertising pulls your basement's gross returns down to 25 per cent on sales. Even this figure will net you around 7 per cent—and you get a great quantity of the best kind of advertising in the bargain.

Not so bad!

We said a few lines back that in the turn of your stock rather than in the size of it was where you gain your net profit. How many times a year should a stock of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods turn when properly featured and pushed in a basement store?

Six times a year is fair. Eight times a year is good. Ten times a year is the mark

attained by many live wire basement store managers. And in some exceptional cases twelve turns a year have been reported.

All the way from eight to ten turns a year is about the average among the best basement stores. A typical case is reported from St. Louis. A dry goods store there put in $1,000 worth of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods and sold in a year exactly $9,733 worth in this line without increasing the investment. This of course takes no account of the sales made in the basement in other lines and the additional business pulled into the upstairs departments.

A very important requisite for basement store success is to have it in charge of a capable manager. In cases where basements do not pay, the trouble nearly always can be traced to the manager—or rather to the lack of a manager.

Get a real manager for the basement, even though you have to manage it yourself at the start. Let this manager understand that he is to be responsible for the success of the new department and that he is to rise with its success or fall with its failure. Tell him that he will have a fair chance and a sufficient representation in the advertising appropriation and in the windows and then expect him to make good. The basement manager generally is given charge of all the buying for the strictly basement line. Goods in stock and other departments of the store should be billed to him as if they were being sent to another store and a strict accounting should be insisted upon. In no other way will the basement have absolutely a square deal and a chance to show its profit-getting or profit-losing power.

The owner of a successful Michigan basement store put his advertising man in charge of it. Another made his window trimmer responsible for the basement. Good ideas, both.

The manager secured, the next step is to get the basement ready. A basement should be airy, light and as cheerful as possible. If it is low and dark and stuffy you should have it made deeper and otherwise put in as good a shape as possible.

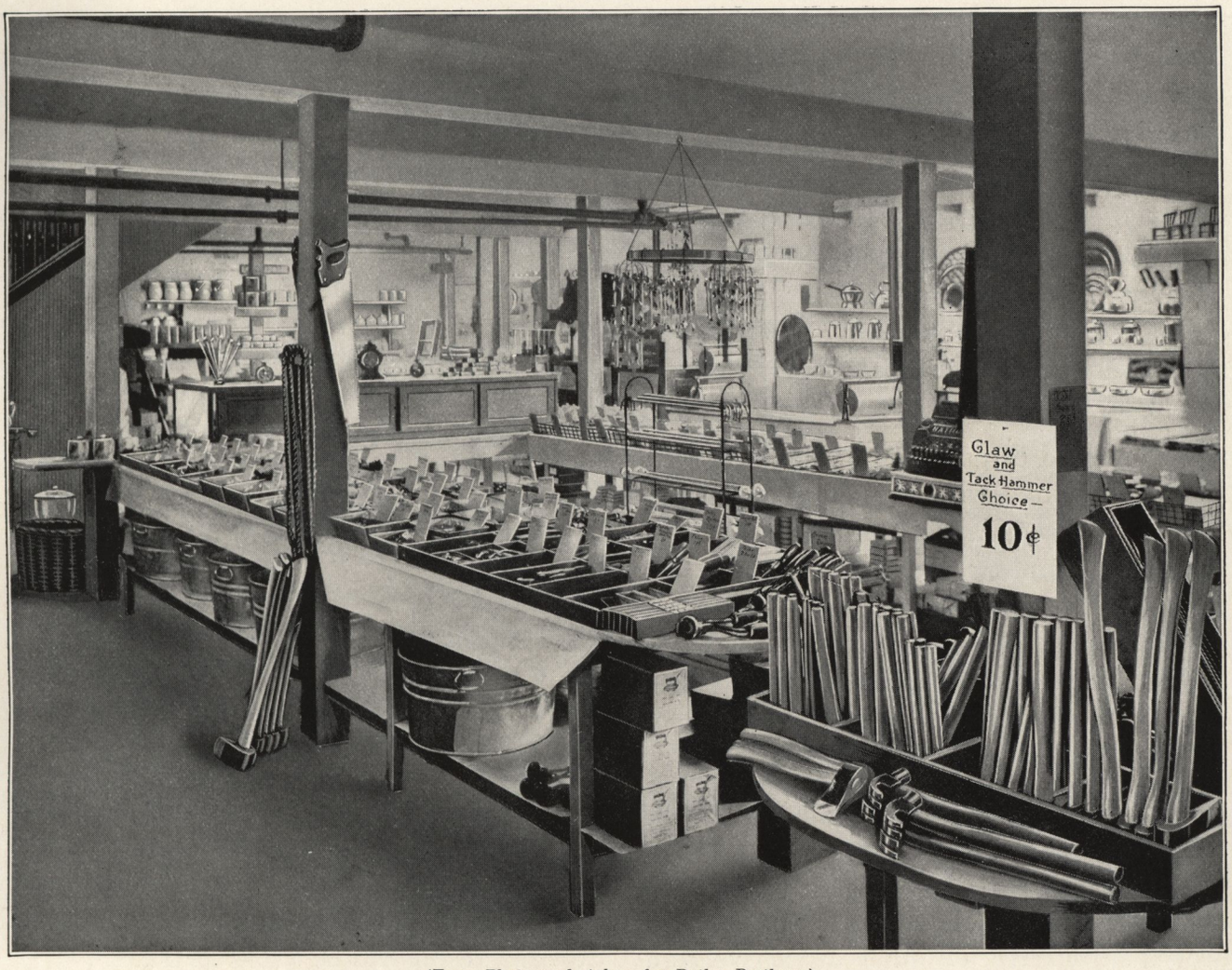
The chances are you have basement space right now that can be changed into an attractive selling section with comparatively small expense.

Even though a great deal of work will be necessary to get the basement into shape you will be surprised on conferring with your contractor to see how reasonable will be the expense of remodeling and rearranging. If you could but see the big things accomplished in the basement line by small stores that you could put in your vest pocket you would think that your basement problem was a very simple one. We have known scores of merchants to make profitable selling sections out of such unpromising things as dark, damp cellars—not basements but *cellars*. Of course, this hasn't been done for nothing, but the expense, all things considered, is remarkably low.

Your room arranged, next would come the floor layout that is best adapted for basement store purposes.

Now you will be up against a proposition that you probably have not encountered in your successful experience as a retailer. The basement business is a business all by itself and the regular standard of dry goods store display will not apply to it with the best of results.

You would do well before deciding upon the layout of your basement to make a careful study of the floor plans we are submit-



(From Photograph taken for Butler Brothers.)

A DRY GOODS STORE'S AD MAN RUNS THIS BASEMENT.
His Success Has Scared Life Into Other Department Heads.

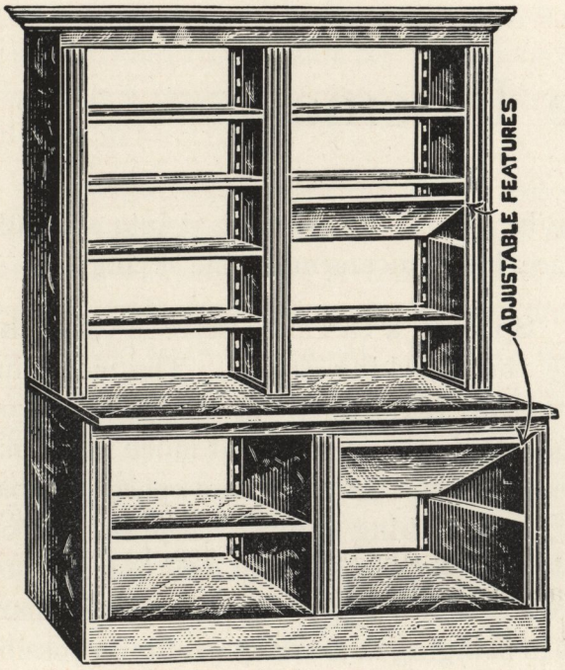
ting in this book. These plans are composite, having been built out of the best features of basement stores in all parts of the country. In one or another of these plans we think we have taken care of practically every problem that may arise in connection with laying out a basement store. A study of them will show you not only how to arrange your basement, but the kind of merchandise to have in it. Also they will show the relative amount of space each particular branch of merchandise ought to have.

Note especially the liberal provision made for entrances to the basement.

This is an extremely important feature. Don't make people hunt for your basement when they come into the store. Of course, you can't afford to devote the whole force of your store organization to advertising the basement. But anyway you don't want to hide it. Give it a fair show.

This matter of basement entrance is many times a bone of contention between manager of the basement and owner of the store.

The writer lately visited numerous dry goods and department stores and has gained the viewpoint both of the managers of the basements and the proprietors of the stores as to the basement's strong and weak points.



SHELVING (Drawing A.)
This is Generally Accepted as the Ideal Kind for Displaying 5, 10 and 25c Goods.

see not only the lineal amount of space required for each counter or table or shelving, but also can see the number of square feet we recommend that each department should have at the beginning. You will find this much more practicable and much easier than measuring space on the floor plan in accordance with a certain prescribed scale.

Be sure you have the right kind of fixtures. Proper fixtures and well made displays are even more important in the basement that they are in the upstairs sections. Upstairs you depend on the services of efficient clerks to sell the goods. In the basement much of this selling must be done by the fixtures and by the displays. The fact that goods can be sold in the basement by this means is one of the strong arguments in its favor—one of the reasons why basement store merchandise can be sold at less expense than that of any other department.

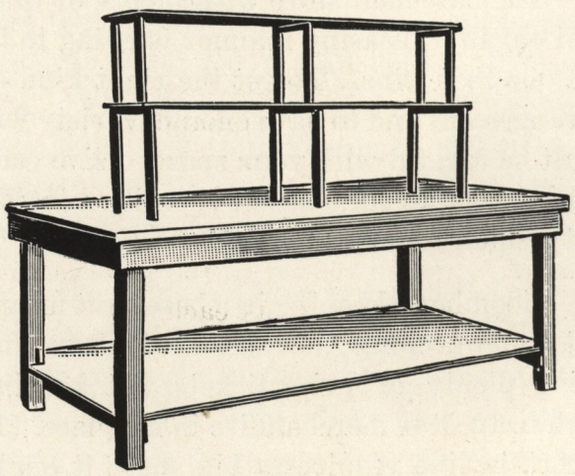
By right fixtures we mean counters, showcases and shelving, which should be arranged in accordance with the latest approved ideas. We are ready to furnish specifications for the proper kind of fixtures and invite you to make full and free use of our facilities in this direction.

A very effective kind of shelving is illustrated in drawing A. The shelves are 8 inches wide and the base 12 inches wide. The top of the base is 32 inches from the floor. There are 4 adjustable shelves above and one below.

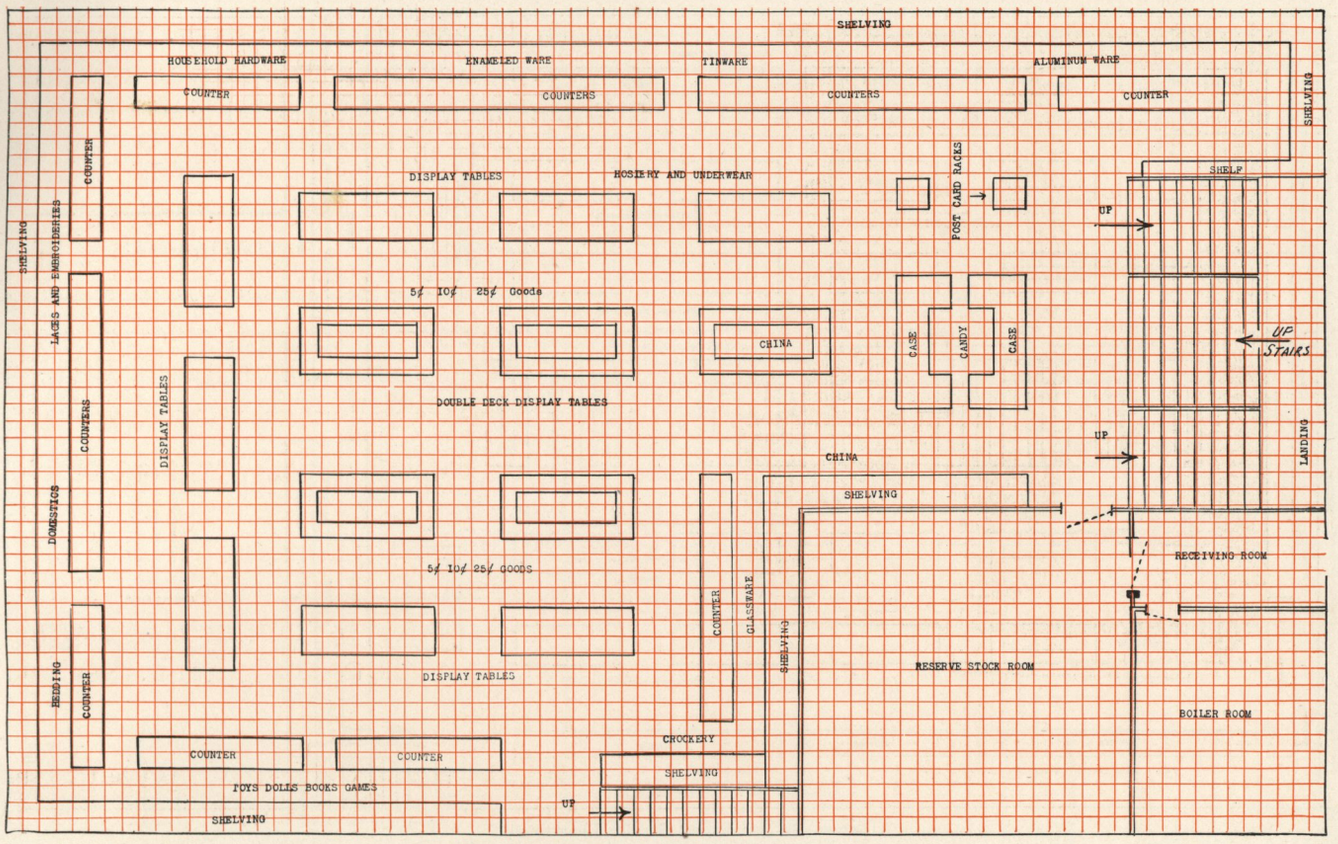
In the floor plans that this booklet presents you will find provisions for bargain tables. For this purpose the three-deck table shown in drawing B is very useful. The dimensions are 6 feet by 3 feet 2 inches, with a 2½ inch leg. The construction is easy and inexpensive.

When you get ready to fit up your basement we advise you to send for our specifications on fixtures. We can give you resultful and expert attention in this line and give you plans for fixtures that will apply specifically to your store and make proper provision for any out of the ordinary requirement.

On the next four pages we are illustrating and describing in detail the four model basement store plans above referred to.



A DISPLAY TABLE (Drawing B.)



(Drawn by Our Expert Service Department.)

FLOOR PLAN FOR A BASEMENT 50x80 FEET.

(Each Square Represents a Square Foot.)

The plan shown on this page is for a basement 50x80 feet. It was primarily arranged for a basement with a rear entrance.

Take special note of the liberal space and prominent position given the candy case and postcard rack. These are placed so as to attract the attention of customers both as they enter the basement and as they leave.

Note also the convenient arrangement of the boiler room, receiving room and reserve stock room. All the merchandise should be sent to the receiving room by means of a flight of steps and slide as is shown by the drawing. The goods then can be unpacked, checked out and placed in the reserve stock room to be drawn on as each day's selling may require.

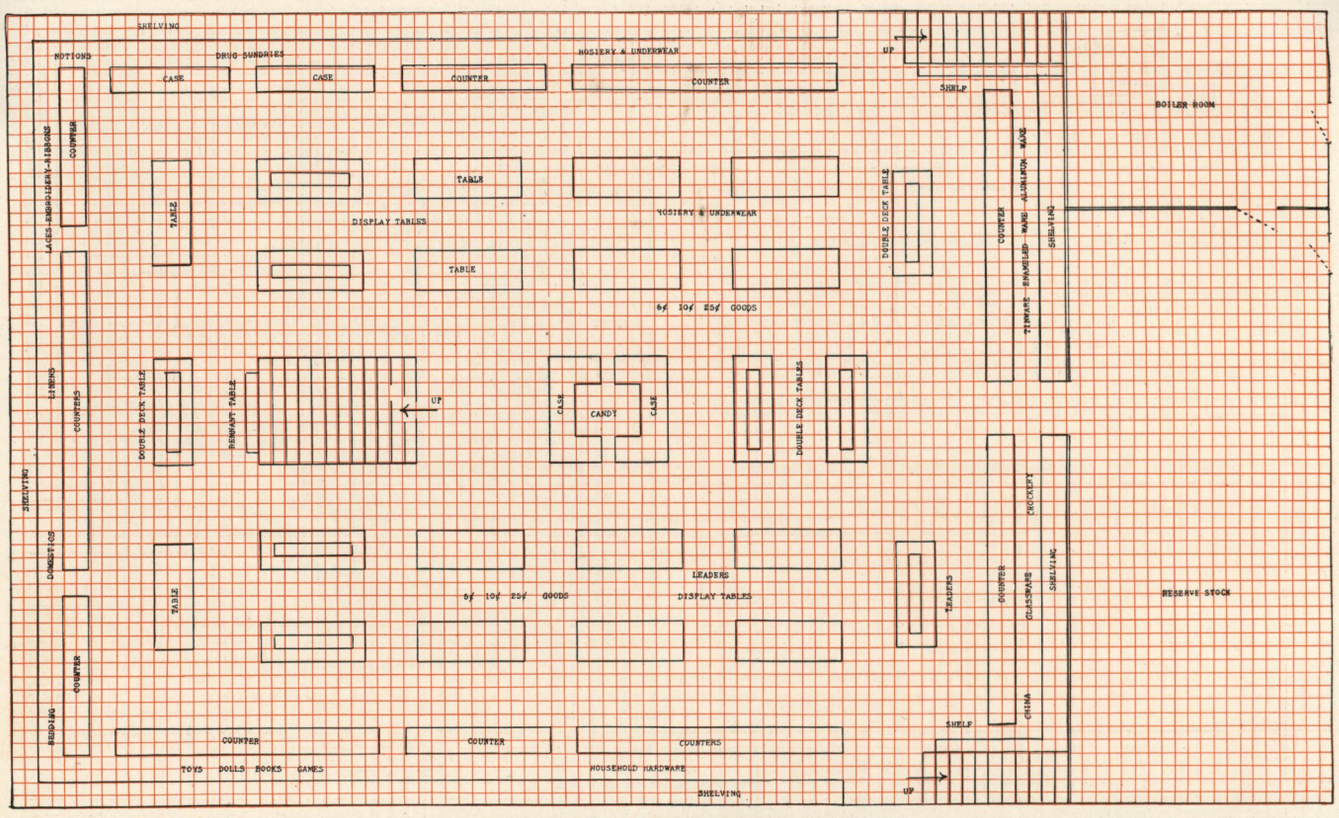
At the side of the store is a single stairway leading to the floor above. This will be popular with people who do not care to use the main stairway.

Around the outer sides of the room is placed a shelving 18 inches wide for the holding and display of merchandise. The arrangement of the counters and double deck display tables for various lines is plainly shown.

Wide aisle space between the tables and counters is obtained by this layout, making each department easily accessible.

The layout is strong in the prominence it gives 5, 10 and 25 cent goods. The three tables in front of the domestic, bedding, laces and embroidery departments may be used for displaying these lines. The double deck tables are especially adapted for showing 5, 10 and 25 cent goods and are sure to attract trade when the merchandise is artistically arranged and has plenty of price tickets.

The three tables along the outer aisle may be used for displaying special values in hosiery, underwear or other dry goods specialty lines.



(Drawn By Our Expert Service Department.)

FLOOR PLAN FOR A BASEMENT 50x100 FEET.

(Each Square Represents a Square Foot.)

In this plan for a 50x100 basement we show the entrance from the main floor by means of a wide stairway located about 20 feet from the front of the store. This is a very favorable location for a stairway. On the floor above, the entrance should be prominent.

Here, as in the previous plan, we have given prominence to candy. Customers will pass this department when they enter the basement and when they leave. Upon each side of the candy department are the main aisles leading to the rear of the store, where is placed the china, glassware, tinware, enameledware, and aluminum ware departments. Around the outer wall should be placed shelving, counters and display cases as designated by the drawing.

The display tables we have designated for leaders are well to the rear. One of the tables on the opposite side of the basement marked for hosiery and underwear could be used for leaders, also. This plan will cause customers to walk through the basement before reaching the leaders.

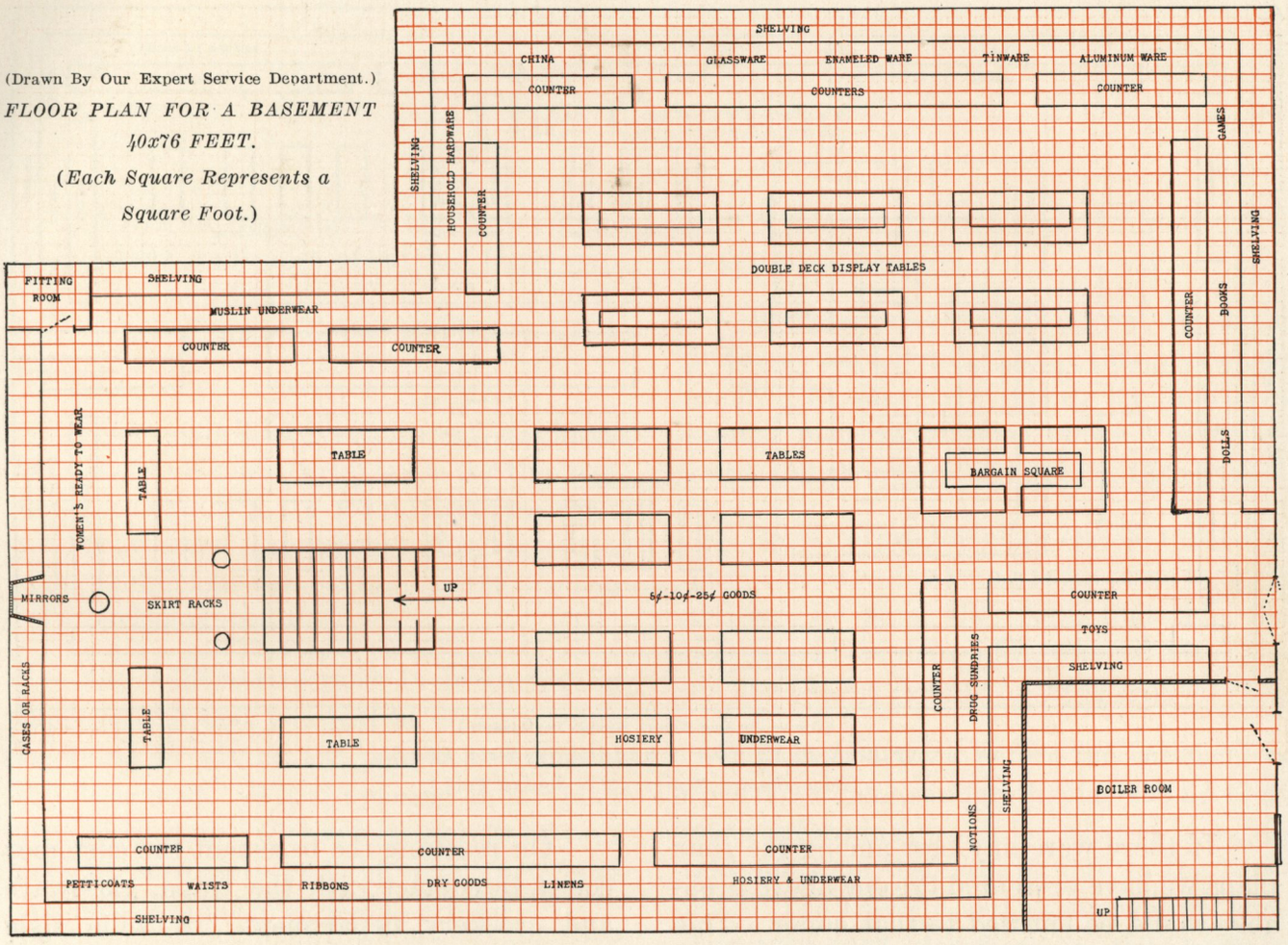
Another feature of this plan that commends itself is the location of the single stairway at the side and rear. Just back of the main stairway will be noticed a narrow shelf or table which can be utilized for remnants.

You will note this entire plan is arranged so that the most tempting items of merchandise are placed where to get at them people have to go clear through the basement and thus see practically all there is offered. This is a much to be desired element in successful basement planning. It enables you to control the situation at all times and to distribute your customers as you want to have them distributed in order that they may see every selling department of your basement.

(Drawn By Our Expert Service Department.)

FLOOR PLAN FOR A BASEMENT 40x76 FEET.

(Each Square Represents a Square Foot.)



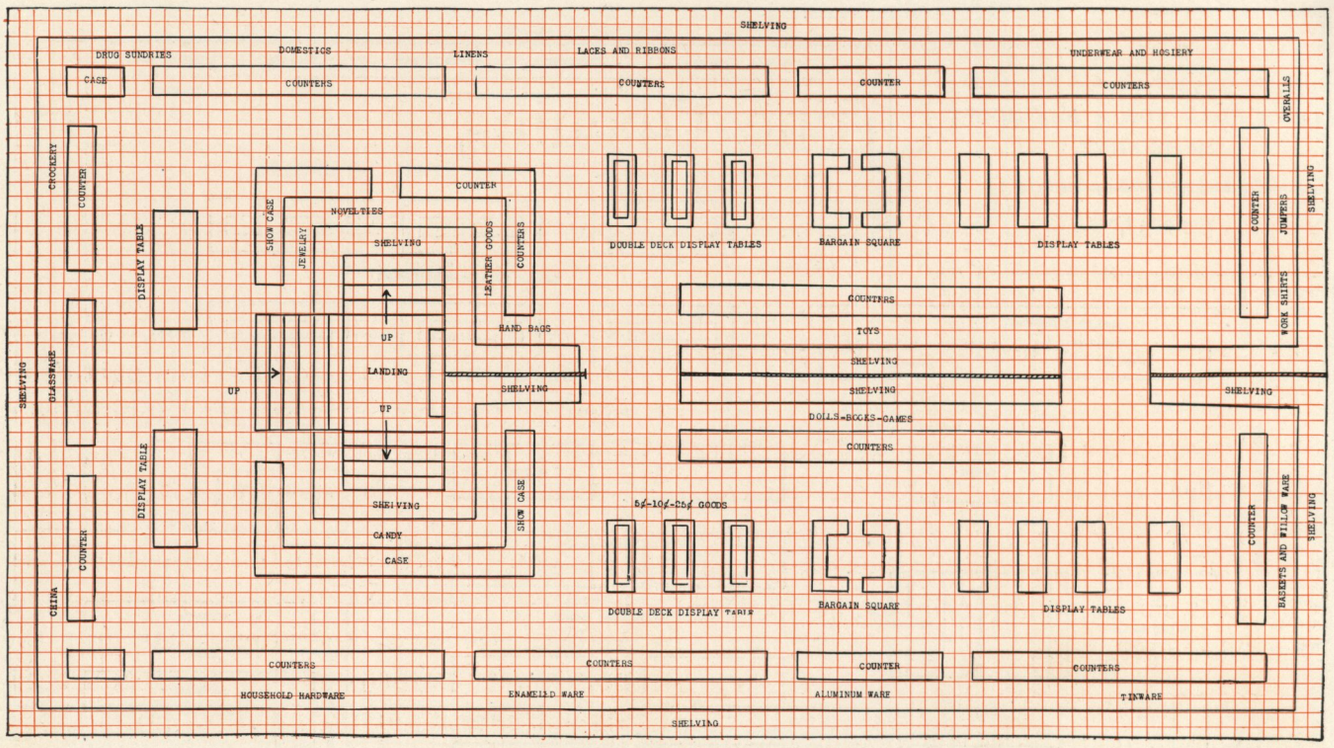
If you have an annex to your basement the layout shown on this page undoubtedly will appeal to you.

This shows how to make a rather useless annex give a good account of itself. Some basements have annex or catch-all rooms that are used for storing old boxes, lumber and rubbish in general. By removing the partitions, an annex room may be turned into space that pays a profit for practically every square foot of space. You can't afford to be wasting a lot of space that could just as well be paying you money. Remember the more space you have at work the larger variety can you have.

In this design we have shown how women's ready-to-wear goods may be shown and sold in the basement. At the end of the basement are placed cases or wall racks for displaying and holding the garments. Midway between these wall pieces is a triplicate mirror. In one corner is the fitting room. In the fitting room should be a door with a large mirror upon it. Right next to the women's ready-to-wear department we have added selling and display space for waists and underwear. You will do well to cover this section of the basement floor with inlaid linoleum over which a rug can be thrown.

The stairway and aisle arrangement is very good. The customer descends a broad, easy stairway and then finds herself in a wide aisle from which she can get a view of a good part of the store. The bargain square was placed in the rear so as to draw customers back that way. It can be utilized for displaying and selling loss leaders.

Access to the boiler room from the floor above is by means of a single stairway as shown in the drawing.



(Drawn By Our Expert Service Department.)

FLOOR PLAN FOR A BASEMENT 50x90 FEET.

(Each Square Represents a Square Foot.)

If there were any best among the four plans we have presented the one above probably would be entitled to that honor. This shows a model arrangement for a double basement, the two rooms being connected by an archway. It is designed for a store 50x90 feet and is an ideal arrangement, because it utilizes every inch of space.

Variety is provided for by a large number of departments and every bit of space not taken up for selling purposes is very appropriately divided up for aisle space, allowing easy access to any or every department.

The entrance from the first floor is attractive. It consists of a flight of steps on each side to a landing and then down a single flight of steps to the basement. Around this stairway is placed the candy department on one side and jewelry, novelties and leather goods on the other. These are lively sellers and it will pay you to give them all the prominence possible.

On reaching the basement the customer comes in contact with the china, glassware and crockery department. A wide aisle space is left on each side so she can reach the rear of the store easily even in the midst of a crowd.

In one room and up against the partition shelving is built a counter for the display of dolls, books and games. This will be popular all the year round if you give it the right kind of attention. The customer then can go through the archway and on the other side is found the toy department.

The location of the bargain squares and the loss leader display table is such that they are bound to draw the customer back through the store.

The location for various departments in this plan, together with the average space usually required for each, is clearly indicated by the drawing and the squares.

The Opening

HAVE an opening—a big one. Make some real noise about it. Give your ideas of dignity a little vacation or at least relax a little on the dignity proposition.

We wouldn't have you use red ink, brass band methods to drum up trade for this particular day. But we would impress upon you that some exceptional interest—even some excitement—is essential at the opening of a basement store.

You want to remember in arranging for this opening that you will be doing a popular thing by giving the people a chance at this basement. While opening it for your own profit it also will be to the profit of your present customers and the many new ones you have a right to expect to attract.

Boost hard, therefore, for the basement at least a week previous to the opening day.

While the arrangement and fitting up of the basement is going on, keep the entrances closed so people will not know what is transpiring down below. Try to stir up people's curiosity by having signs at the basement entrances or where the basement entrances will be, saying something interesting is going on in the basement and that due announcement will be made later.

Select the day for the opening after making sure all will be ready for the big event at that time. Then see that everybody in town and the surrounding country knows what is going to happen.

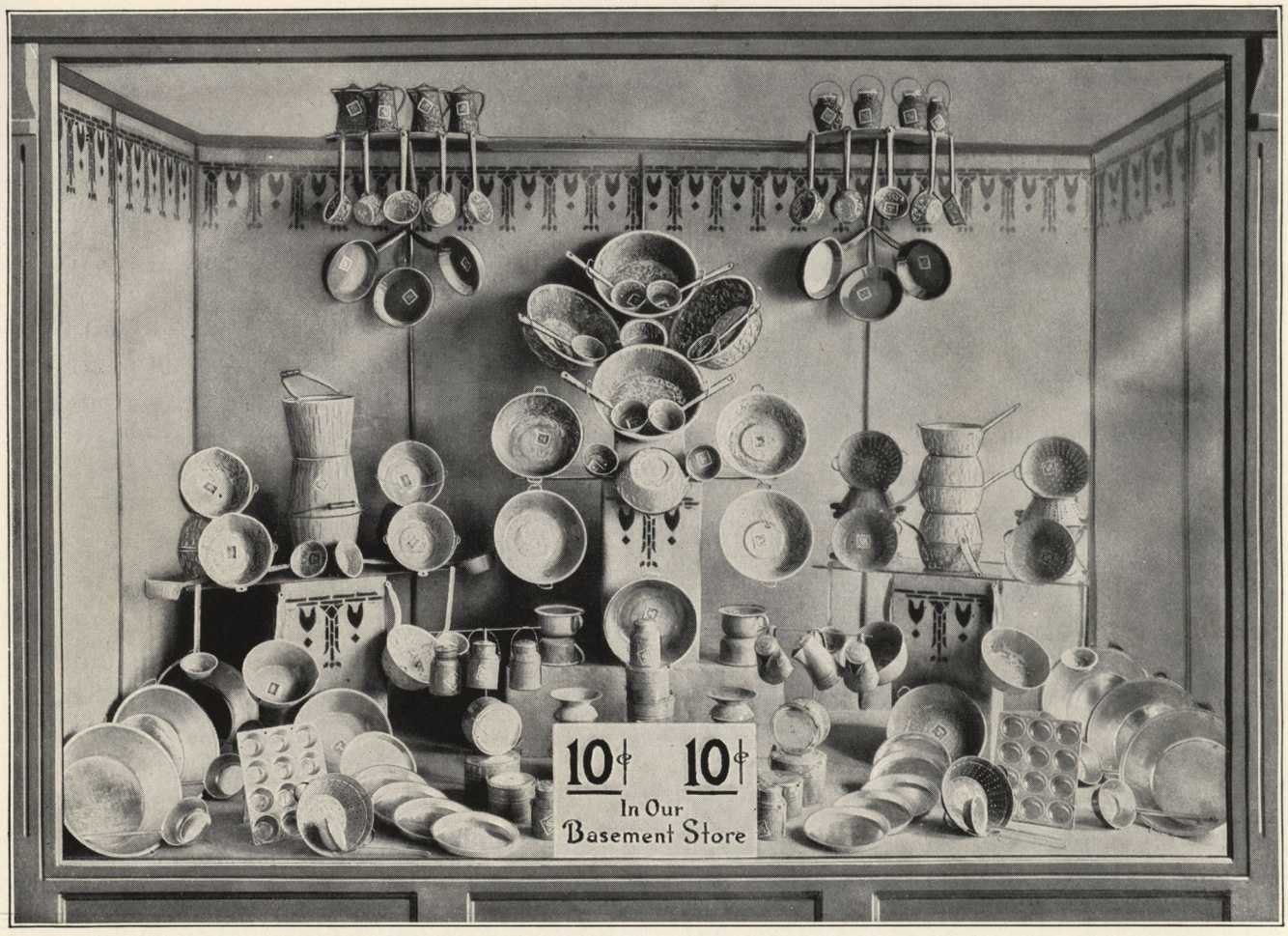
Send out the message through your advertising department. Give it force through your windows. Give it a part of your newspaper advertising.

The most resultful thing you can do in printers' ink advertising for this particular event is to send out a strong handbill containing pictures of some of your best bargains and shouting price, price, throughout.

Don't forget the main excuse this basement can have for being is its price-making ability. Be sure, therefore, that all the people get this price idea, when reading the announcement for the opening day.

At least a week before the basement is opened a strong window display should be at work informing people of what is going to take place on the opening day in the basement. The tinware and enameledware window presented elsewhere in this book is recommended as a good opening window. This will answer, no matter what the season. A window of enameledware and tinware has a very strong appeal in a dry goods store from its very novelty. People have been in the habit of seeing high grade displays of dry goods and kindred items in your windows. Now for you to show kitchen goods is in itself enough to make them stop and take notice.

Make the opening day a lively proposition. Have a souvenir for each woman who calls—a rose or a carnation, perhaps. Have enough big leader values to bring in the crowd. See that these leaders are displayed in the extreme rear so people will have to go clear through before they get what they are after.



A GOOD OPENING WINDOW—ENAMELED WARE AND TINWARE.
(Made By Our Expert Service Department.)

Be extremely careful about your Loss Leader activities on the opening day. This is the way to go about it:

Have one or possibly two paralyzing values—big, showy, well known articles of merchandise that everybody will want—upon which you will stand a stiff loss. Have these leaders displayed on tables in the rear or at least in a location that will make the people go clear through the basement to get at them.

Have a sufficient supply of these big leaders which should, by the way, be lavishly advertised in your printed matter and in your windows. Remember that every one of these leader values taken to a home means a standing ad for you and your basement store. It is to your interest to put out as many of them as possible.

In addition to the big paralyzers that stand out supreme above all other values you of course will want plenty of other notable values to attract the eyes of your customers on the opening day. The impression of price-making ability which the people carry away with them on this first day is something that you are going to gain dividends on for a long time to come. This makes it good business for you to be doubly sure the basement on the opening day gives more than ample evidence of what you are going to be able to do in the way of saving people money.

Don't have too many of these very big leaders, but have plenty of the lesser ones.

The best kind of big leaders for opening days are articles needed in the home. For example, every housewife's old friend the 14-quart enameled dish pan always will draw a crowd. Another thing popular with the women is a high grade salad bowl for ten cents. Glass water pitchers for ten cents, good bath towels for ten cents are other suggestions. Many leader ideas will come to you as you look over your stock.

Be sure you have plenty of help in the basement for the opening day. You can reasonably count on having the biggest and most eager crowd that ever has been seen in your store. You want to handle this crowd as efficiently as possible.

Put some of your best clerks in the basement for the opening day and plenty of them. Give good service along with your good values.

Keeping Things Going

YOU will find that you have started with the opening day something that will pay you dividends for a long time to come—if you go after the dividends. Be sure you follow up this advantage in the strongest possible way.

The watchword of success in the basement store is this:

Something new all the time; something doing all the time.

The basement must have life at all times —new goods, new bargains, new displays, new advertising.

Have a leader sale at least once a week. Many basement store managers utilize these leader sales for bringing people in during the early morning hours. Thus they anticipate part of the afternoon rush.

For example, you can advertise that a certain leader will be on sale Wednesday from nine to twelve. The chances are, 50 per cent of the women that planned an afternoon trip down town will make the trip in the morning for the purpose of getting one of these leaders. Once down, they naturally will go into other departments and complete their day's shopping.

This will enable you to even up the day's business in a way much more satisfactory to all concerned. You will conserve the time and energy of your clerks. And you will sell more goods than you do when people try to crowd a whole day's shopping into the closing two or three hours in the afternoon.

Some merchants use early morning leaders every day. This brings people to the store before noon and makes busy what otherwise might be a dull morning period. The people will come in the morning, all right. Don't have any misgivings on that score. There are enough thrifty women always on the lookout for bargains to assure the success of any worthy and well advertised leader sale.

Keep up a persistent and steady window campaign in behalf of your basement. This is one of the very best methods of advertising such a department and you can make a success of it by means of the price advertis-

ing campaign which we speak of in the next chapter even if you entirely ignore it in the printed word. But it takes the printed word to bring a well rounded out system of advertising.

For the few weeks following the opening day you ought to be much more persistent than the average in advertising the basement. This is for the purpose of educating the people into the value-giving power of the new department. You will find them ready and willing, even eager to learn. Your advertising, therefore, will be as seed sowed on good ground.

Advertising the Basement

A BASEMENT store is a peculiar proposition as regards advertising.

In itself it is one big advertisement for the store. And as such it is perhaps the only kind of advertising that you could get that pulls customers to every department of your store, and in the very act of pulling pays a bigger net profit, investment considered, than any of the departments it benefits.

The very act of advertising a basement store is an asset rather than an expense. The basement store adds force and results to your publicity work, because it gives an opportunity to utilize price advertising.

This price advertising, remember, pulls customers not only to the basement but to all the store, and thus the basement performs for the other departments a tremendous service, which in their very nature they are absolutely incapable of.

What is price advertising?

It is giving some big bargain or bargains—stunning ones, likely—to your customers on a certain day to get them into your store.

It is the best kind of advertising from the standpoint of the basement store, because it is advertising that satisfies—that overcomes people's disinclination to spend money.

The value of price advertising rests in the fact that nearly every woman and most men are on the outlook for ways and means to make their money go as far as possible.

You probably are running a quality store and pride yourself on selling quality goods. This is well. But how about the profitable trade of the masses?

It is only the occasional person that can buy things regardless of price. One very important duty of practically everybody is getting things for as little money as possible.

The average woman never is able to get all the things she wants. Life with her is one constant struggle to make her limited resources go as far as possible. She sees on every hand things she wants to wear, have her family wear, or have in her house. And she reads about them in the newspaper advertising. She is interested, but she can't get nearly all she wants, because she hasn't the money.

This is the situation of a very large percentage of the women of this country—women of practically every class except the wealthy.

A quality store devoting most of its attention to quality goods is likely to make the average woman buyer uncomfortable. She

A WINDOW TRIM OF BASEMENT CHINA AND GLASSWARE.
(Made By Our Expert Service Department.)

likes to be in a price atmosphere when she is buying rather than in a quality atmosphere.

The average woman of course would prefer quality to price, but she can't get it. It is only a few times in her life that she buys goods regardless of price. When her daughter is married or on some other extraordinary occasion she is likely to go out and buy something the very best of its class and think of the price afterwards. But in the ordinary serious business of life and in supplying the every day needs of herself and her family she considers price.

Then, there are different standards of quality.

What is a quality item in a village would be far from such on State street. Quality is a matter of geography and knowledge of people. By the same token a quality store is not necessarily high priced. A ten-cent article may be a quality purchase for one person—just as much so as a $50 article would for another. A rich man may buy hose for his own use for 50 cents a pair and think he is getting quality. His son would regard 50-cent socks as too plebeian a brand for him to use in covering his pedal extremities. The son would want silk socks—perhaps higher priced than any you have in the store. This to him would be quality. Price, then, appeals to these people because of their varying ideas as to quality.

And price is sure to appeal to the woman who has to buy hose for herself, perhaps her mother-in-law, her children—and then if any money is left, some for her husband. This woman may be in comfortable circumstances. But she considers the price. She has to. She won't buy trash. Trash is expensive at any price. She must, though, have value for the least money and will go to the store where she can get it.

Price is the language that talks to her with equal efficiency whether she lives in New York, Philadelphia, Kokomo or Emporia.

Selling the masses quality goods at quality prices no matter how pronounced may be the values you give them will not necessarily make them friends of your store. A woman may see some splendid thing in your store that she feels she just "must have." She buys it and pays your price. This price, while altogether reasonable and fair, may be more than she can afford. But she is so sure she wants the article that she will go without other things to get it.

Her purchase doubtless will please her, but her enjoyment will be tempered by the remembrance of the 2, 3 or 5 extra dollars that she paid for it. To be sure, this will not make her think any the less of your store. But it most certainly will not help to create in her mind the idea that your store is the place to buy the great bulk of things her household requires—things in which price rather than quality necessarily must be the deciding factor.

On the other hand sell this woman once in a while some smashing big bargain at a price that she can hardly believe is true. This, supplemented by values such as the well conducted basement store gives, will lead her to associate your store with price giving. What greater asset can you have?

Utilize price advertising rather than quality to bring in the people!

And price advertising, directed from the basement, can bring in the people *without detracting in the slightest degree from the dignity or standing of your store as a quality proposition.*

You have got to get the people into your store—the masses of people. If you don't, you lose trade that represents the difference between a moderate and notable success. If you don't get the masses into your store for their ordinary, everyday trade—every bit that it is possible for you to get—you not only lose this, but you are in danger of losing the quality buying they may do.

Well, then, what is price advertising?

It is offering an article for less than it is worth—at maybe one-third less than your cost—for strictly advertising purposes. It is taking some of the money that you would pay the printer and paying it to your customers in the way of offering them merchandise that they know at prices they do not know. It is utilizing merchandise Stimulators to bring trade to the store.

Sometimes very strong emphasis should be placed upon the word "loss." Then again a leader can be offered at a figure that will enable you to come out even or perhaps make a profit. But in any event the value offered must be notable, one that will impress.

There ought at all times to be present in your basement store some of these leader values showing forth your price-making ability. Then at regular intervals, perhaps each Wednesday, you should have a Stimulator sale—a price advertising sale.

You will find it very good and resultful business to make considerable noise about these leader offerings. The best results can be gained sometimes by limiting the time of the sale to certain hours in the morning or afternoon. This sort of restriction enables you to regulate in a measure the shopping hours of your customers and to bring them down to the store at whatever time fits in the best with the day's activities.

One week you could fill up your window with brooms at ten cents each.

Another week the offering could be a 14-qt. enameled dish pan, or some other big item in enameled ware.

Again you could make your offering a big bath towel for a dime or make a big display of hosiery for ten cents or women's vests for ten cents.

Many of your regular departments will offer suggestions for leader sales and the burden can be thrown upon the basement. Thus the crowds will be brought and the main part of the store will suffer not one whit of a loss in dignity.

The time to offer the biggest leaders is at seasons when the trade is likely to be dull. Then, to get the best results, you will have to take a good stiff loss on some item. Another time you could come out even on your leaders and at certain seasons such as Christmas or other lively trading periods, you can offer such leaders as will give you a fancy profit. Average the thing up and your leader expense if you conduct the campaigns correctly will be just about what so much printed advertising would cost.

The printers' ink part of your basement advertising campaign will entail little expense—that is, little *extra* expense. You will be paying so much for advertising in the newspapers, anyway, and the basement offerings can very conveniently be carried along with the others.

Now, we are going to hit you between the eyes with another proposition that will be new to you—one that you ought to use to get the best results from your basement.

You probably have good reason to be proud of the advertising put out by your store. This probably is your pet. If you don't handle it yourself it is a pretty safe guess that you dictate practically every step that is made in a publicity way. For other people—jobbers, for instance—to step in and tell you they can do certain parts of your advertising better than you can will no doubt strike you as the very limit of presumption. Yet it is some such message that we desire to give you at this time.

We are not going to insist we can do any part of your advertising better than you can do it. But we are going to say—and we invite you to make us prove it—that we can save you money and time on one very important division of the printed advertising which will help your basement win.

It is good business and good sense, now and then—on the opening day, for example, to send out a well printed, finely illustrated handbill advertising certain big selling events.

These handbills are especially adapted to advertising a department that has a multitude of items like your basement, and to get them up so they will pull the best, requires the use of many cuts and the expenditure of a lot of good handwork.

The advertising departments of stores having basement sections are not at their best when they get up handbills of this kind.

This is because they as a rule are not fully equipped to give the peculiar kind of advertising that a basement requires no matter how complete may be their equipment for advertising the store proper.

And right here is where we can make good on our assertion that we can save you money and time on your advertising.

We have a plan called the Block System of Advertising. This is especially adapted to just such needs as we have just outlined. It is not a canned system, strictly speaking. You can select your own goods and name your own prices, have use of high art headings and the very best kind of merchandise illustrations, and have us do the printing for you—and the whole thing will cost considerably less than ordinary printing would cost you, even after you had paid all the preliminary expense and borne the burden of all the work.

We are not going to take up your time by an exposition of the Block System here. But we invite you to send for a Block System catalogue and let the thing tell you its story in its own way. If you are convinced, so much the better for you. If you decide after reading the catalogue that you still prefer to handle that end of your advertising yourself you will have gained some interesting light on advertising, anyway.

Getting the Goods

WHEN you see a basement store attain a notable success it will take only a little time to ascertain that one of the most sturdy caissons under the structure of its achievements is good buying.

What does the good buyer do?

(1) He buys what HE can sell at a profit.

(2) He buys enough and not too much of the various lines that HE can sell at a profit.

(3) He gets the right price.

When a merchant buys on these three lines he is buying to get a profit. And he *gets* a profit.

A good buyer seldom makes the mistake of centering his whole attention on the third of these qualifications at the expense of the first and second. When he does, he suffers for it in having merchandise that does not move promptly and that eats up profits in deterioration of value.

The utmost necessity of having the largest possible number of items in his stock and a sufficient quantity—not too much or too little—of each makes the basement store buyer's problem different from that of the other department managers.

When a buyer specializes on dress goods, for instance, and women's ready-to-wear he has an important and big task. But it is simplified in the fact that his buying is limited to these lines. The comparatively small number of items he has to purchase gives him abundant opportunity to study styles and values and to know where he can get what he wants to the best advantage.

The man who buys shoes buys shoes. He knows where shoes are made. He knows the seasonable styles and knows where to buy them at the right price. And his is an important problem also. But from the fact

WINDOW TRIM OF KITCHEN HARDWARE FROM BASEMENT.
(Made By Our Expert Service Department.)

that his buying activities are limited to shoes he can bring to bear all his resources, all his ability on that particular line. Thus the way is open for him to become a specialist in shoes if he has the proper foundation upon which to build.

The basement buyer's proposition is entirely different. He specializes not on dress goods, not on shoes, not on ready-to-wear. He specializes upon the great and broad field of general merchandise. He must know where he can buy not only two or three or ten items. He must know where to buy literally *thousands* of items and buy them right. If he would depend upon his own ability alone he must be a specialist in dry goods, in woodenware, in hardware, in notions and in house furnishings in general. He must know how to buy candy, drug sundries, jewelry, pictures, toilet goods, tools and a multitude of other lines.

When he starts out to get this great and varied stock—great in variety although not necessarily great in quantity or investment—he finds himself beset by many dangers. He reaches out into the great and comparatively unknown field of general merchandise. He buys here and he buys there. At one place

his purchase in a particular line may not be large enough for an economical shipment and so he buys more than he needs. In another place he gets a discount on a large quantity and so buys more than he needs there. So it goes on down the line.

Before long this basement buyer finds his space is choked up with merchandise. He has more in many lines than he will need for a long time to come. Then comes his troubles which we need not enlarge on here, as every successful merchant knows the dangers of overbuying.

What then is the basement buyer to do to get the thousands of items he must have to carry on his business? How is he going to get sufficient variety without overstocking at least in some lines?

And how is he going to know where to put his finger upon the great number of individual lines he needs?

The answer is this:

HE MUST CONCENTRATE HIS PURCHASES, BUYING MANY LINES IN ONE BILL AND IN ONE SHIPMENT. HE MUST WITH THIS GET THE RIGHT PRICE.

Moreover, he must bear in mind that the only way to get a real net profit is to turn his stock the greatest number of times. This, of course, necessitates a constant study of the quantity of any one item that can be disposed of profitably in his community. This study if persisted in will automatically keep the buyer from taking on factory lots at $9.00 a gross where a few dozen at 79c would be sufficient—and be a cheaper purchase both for him and his net profits.

Now we are going to ask your indulgence for just a minute while we blow our own horn a little.

We say it entirely without conceit—and we invite you to make us prove it—that we are the world's leading authorities in general merchandise. If we didn't know more about it than anybody else does, our business would not have reached its present proportions.

The successful basement buyer needs the services of Butler Brothers and we are going to show you why.

In the first place we can supply him with the expert knowledge of things in the multitude of lines in which he must specialize. Reaching out as we do into every part of the world where things are made to sell and bringing these things together in our five distributing houses through buying in five-house quantities, we can give the basement buyer the privilege of concentrating his purchases at one point, and getting *in one bill and one shipment* a sufficient quantity of absolutely every item of merchandise in his line that the world has to offer.

Then, there are other reasons why the merchant with a basement store—even the biggest merchant—finds it to his advantage to buy from Butler Brothers.

He knows we have immense open stocks and that he can be sure of getting any quantity of merchandise, be it large or small, without delay. He knows when we advertise a thing we have it and that the man who orders it need not undergo any annoying factory delays or any other kind of delays.

He likes to buy merchandise of Butler Brothers because we quote him the lowest prices and illustrate to him the latest goods in our catalogue every thirty days.

There is not the least question that buying from a catalogue like ours is the ideal way of laying in a stock of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods

WINDOW DISPLAY OF BASEMENT ALL-THE-YEAR TOYS.
(Made By Our Expert Service Department.)

and of keeping it up in the right way after it is laid in. It is a pretty big job for any buyer, no matter how smart he may be, to keep up with the thousand and one items in his stock and the new things coming out from time to time unless he has a catalogue like ours. This stands to reason because, as we said only a moment ago, it is decidedly out of the ordinary for a man to be a buying expert in more than a few lines. Our catalogue represents not the expert buying of one or two men. It is made possible through the expert knowledge of many buyers—each one a past master in his particular line.

Of course, the big merchant has a thorough knowledge of merchandise. If he hadn't he would not be big. But his very bigness enables him better to recognize the real powers we possess in this catalogue for saving him time and saving him money.

All these advantages of successful buying make the big merchant buy 5, 10 and 25 cent goods of us rather than search for a few pennies of price advantage that he might be able to gain by buying in factory quantities.

The fact that we ourselves buy in quantities sufficient to take care of the business of

our five distributing houses is plenty of evidence to the well informed merchant of our price-making ability.

The good buyer is impressed by this kind of buying facilities, because he well knows successful buying always considers the ultimate profit along with present advantages. Just because a man can buy a big factory quantity of merchandise at a slight price concession is no evidence that he is going to make a profit out of it. His buying, as we pointed out above, always must be based on what HE can sell at a profit.

The basement buyer then can have the satisfaction of knowing that when he is buying from Butler Brothers he is buying safely. He is buying safely because he gets the lowest guaranteed net price—a price made possible by five house buying and years of expert knowledge in these lines. He is buying safely because he knows the merchandise offered him is the very best that can be made for his particular purpose. He is buying safely because his buying so far as practical results go takes on expertness and resultfulness it would not have if he had the privilege of confining his operations to one or a few lines as other dry goods store buyers do.

Butler Brothers built up the greatest wholesale business in the world by making it possible for their customers to buy single dozens at right prices.

In other words, it amounts to this: Here in each of our five cities are our warehouses filled at all times with merchandise from everywhere. We of course have to assume risk in this. Somebody has to take a risk in the great scheme of distribution of merchandise from the maker to the consumer. But the retailer does not have to take this risk—when he buys from us. We take it. Our capital is invested. Our space is taken up. All the buyer has to do is merely to draw on us at any time for such quantities as he can best sell in his own store or basement and thus make his capital work to its very utmost and conserve his profits to the limit.

What we have said about ourselves has been said in a spirit of modesty. We merely have endeavored to tell you in plain English what we are and what we are able to do for the dry goods man who wants to start a basement store.

And we invite you to make us prove it. It will be a simple and easy matter for you to find out whether we are telling the truth or whether we have too exalted a conception of what we are and what we can do.

Compare! Compare!

This is the way to find out.

We want you to start a basement store because we know you can make a success of it, and because we want to sell you the merchandise with which to make this success.

But we don't expect to share in the prosperity that will come to your basement unless you find it to your advantage to buy from us.

We invite the strongest test you can apply. Compare our merchandise. Compare our prices. Compare our methods and our service. Then let the best man win.

If, after making this comparison, you find you can start and maintain a basement store better by using other people's merchandise than you can by using Butler Brothers' merchandise we have nothing more to say. In that event, we shall have performed a service for some other jobber.

But be sure to make the comparison. This is all we have a right to ask.

Taking Out the Mystery

EVERY up-to-date retailer knows about the amazingly active business done by the five and ten cent stores. He also knows that the competition forced upon him by the syndicate stores is cutting into his net profits.

"What do you hear about syndicate competition? Do the merchants complain very much about losing trade to the 5 and 10 cent stores?"

These are questions that were asked the writer by numerous dry goods retailers during a recent trip in which this subject was investigated.

Dry goods men in general—some of the biggest ones—have rightly concluded that the syndicate store is no mean competitor. They have overcome or are overcoming any idea they might have that syndicate competition was something they need not bother about.

The syndicate man is your competitor, and the sooner you face this thing fairly and squarely and get hooked up to keep the five and ten cent trade from going to him the better it will be for your net returns.

It is an interesting and even peculiar thing to note the attitude of the average merchant toward the syndicate store.

It apparently is believed in some quarters that there is some hidden secret—some mystery—about the five and ten cent store and its way of doing business that the average merchant can have no part in.

What is this secret, if there be such a thing?

Why is it that the stores selling this class of merchandise are always busy, no matter how dull may be the condition in other stores?

What gives variety stores their well known power to draw people to the store at any season?

Mystery? Yes, in one way and NO in another.

It is clear as the brightest daylight when one once gets the key.

First, there is the merchandise. It has great and easily recognized value. But it is low, low, low in price. It draws people into the store. It makes them buy in spite of themselves.

This is part of the mystery. But the most important part is the way in which 5, 10 and 25 cent goods are put to work and kept at work in behalf of the store.

The WAY—that is the thing you want to acquaint yourself with right now.

You can get the merchandise with which the syndicate store wins. But don't forget that the WAY in which he displays this merchandise, the WAY in which he pushes it is what enables him to attain his great success.

If the syndicate store is bothering you—and doubtless it is if you are an average dry goods retailer—you will have to apply the right WAY to meet this competition.

Do this and what you now see through a glass darkly you then will see face to face. What you know now in part then will be a mystery no longer.

The WAY of the syndicate man, which accounts for his success, is this:

(1) Always having a large variety of merchandise at a uniformly popular price.

(2) Always offering a few smashing LEADERS for advertising purposes.

(3) Always having everything in plain sight.

(4) Always having everything price ticketed.

This is not the method of other stores. But it marks the every day conduct of all successful 5 and 10 cent stores.

And it can be used in YOUR store as successfully as in these.

Learn the new WAY!

This is one of the features of modern merchandising that you positively have to meet if you are going to fulfill your mission and gain the profit that may as well be yours. Conservatism is all right. Hugging the traditions of the past may be satisfactory. But the merchant who expects to win in this fast age has to keep up with the procession and travel at a pretty rapid gait or he is going to be left behind.

The devil is not afraid of fire except it be many degrees hotter than any he can kindle himself. The syndicate man is not afraid of any store no matter how big unless it too comes along with a rapidly increasing fire of low priced merchandise and twentieth century methods.

You may not like these methods. In the lesser light of your conservatism you may imagine them to be lurid and undignified. But what are you going to do about it? The problem is here. You have to meet it.

And it is by making a live basement store a part of your organization that you can meet this problem—more than meet it. Through your basement you can reach the trade the syndicate store reaches. Better than all, you can draw people to your store where you have a chance to sell them other things. If a woman goes into a syndicate store and buys a ten cent pair of hose you have reason for apprehension. The profit on that sale will neither make nor break you. But the fact that the woman went into the syndicate store for what you ought to be able to sell her alienates her just that much from your establishment.

So, why be held back by any of the traditions of the past?

A new era of merchandising is here.

When your grandmother wanted to buy a tin pan she went to the hardware store or any other store that sold them. The merchant climbed up to a high shelf, pulled the pan out from a mass of other merchandise, blew off the dust and sold it to your grandmother for four or five times as much as they charge these days. Your grandmother didn't buy a great many tin pans. She could not afford it, because tin pans cost money. So she used and used the one or two pans that graced her kitchen, soldering and resoldering them as occasion required and getting along as well as she could with a comparatively meager kitchen equipment.

Then a new day dawned.

Influenced by the example of what we had accomplished in the popularizing of variety goods, the same merchant took his pans and other kitchen wares from the shelf. He put them on a table where people could get at them and where they could be seen. He put a price ticket on them so people could know how much he wanted for them.

By that time your mother had begun keeping house for herself. She soon found she did not have to purchase as your grand-

(From Photograph taken for Butler Brothers.)

HOMEGOODS SECTION OF CITY BASEMENT STORE.

Arrangement Could Be Improved On, But Owner Praises It as Winner.

mother did. Instead of one pan or two she got a half a dozen, a dozen or as many as she needed. What was the result?

More pans were manufactured than ever before. More were sold. Each pan did not bring such a big profit, but there were a great number of profits in place of a few.

This example of the tin pan was duplicated in a thousand other branches of merchandise, thus bringing about the present opportunity that confronts you in 5, 10 and 25 cent goods.

Is there, then, anything so surpassingly mysterious in the success that attends the sale of 5, 10 and 25 cent goods?

Is it not rather an adjustment of selling conditions along lines that really will make things sell?

The merchants who so resultfully use this way recognize the trade of the masses as a thing of profit. They prefer this profit to the comfortable knowledge that they are treading along the beaten paths of yesterday.

This is the 5, 10 and 25 cent mystery.

You can, if you like, utilize it toward making other retailers wonder about the mysterious something that always keeps your store busy no matter what the condition or what the season.

One essential feature of the WAY is the method of displaying the goods.

You must have the goods people NEED. You must offer them at prices that will make the people WANT them. But you also must show the goods so the people can SEE them. Otherwise, the people won't know about the prices.

As to having everything in plain sight there can of course be no argument. Every merchant, no matter what may be his ideas on other subjects, will readily concede that this is one of the primary requirements for successful merchandising in any line. The basement, though, is the place of all places to work out this principle. Not only should the goods be in plain sight, but they should be displayed on such fixtures and in such a manner that people can see and handle them without difficulty. Goods that are ready sellers when displayed on tables can become stickers when transferred to shelves. The successful basement manager studies and works to have all his goods in as plain a sight as possible.

About price tickets! Upon a lack of these can be blamed in large measure the lack of volume complained of by some basement managers.

Price tickets sell goods. Price tickets sell goods. We are tempted almost to repeat this statement to the extent of a page. Don't forget that price tickets sell goods. They are the very best salesmen in the world and are especially needed on the merchandise featured in the average basement store.

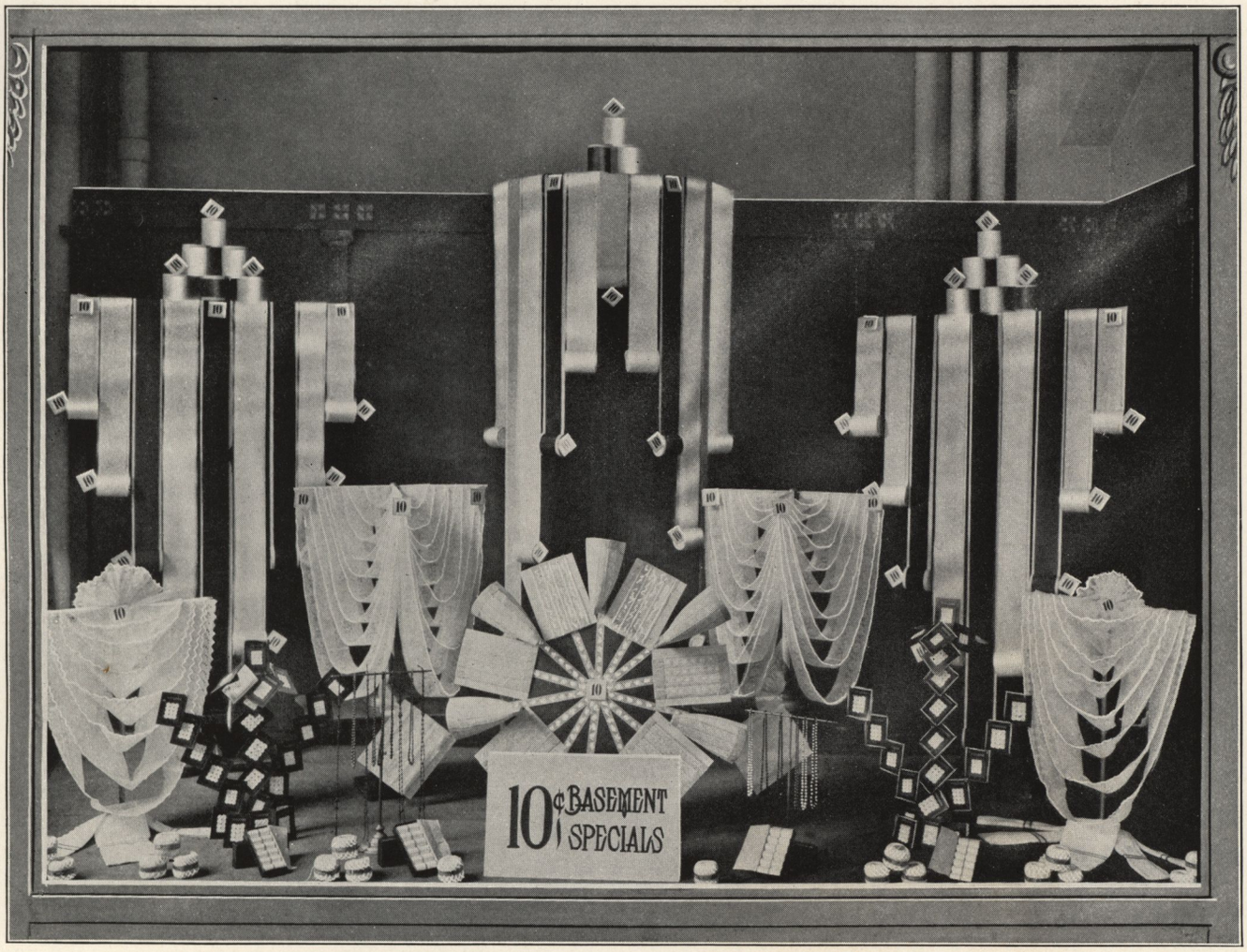
Basement store goods can not reach their true level and do their very best for the store unless price tickets help them.

You need price tickets because the message of price is the biggest excuse your basement has for being. A few price tickets here and there will not carry out this idea so well or so resultfully as many price tickets everywhere. You can't have too many.

When a woman goes into a basement store she is at once attracted by the merchandise. There is a psychological side to this attraction. Perhaps the woman couldn't explain it if she wanted to. Anyway, she doesn't. But she looks at the merchandise. She fingers over a display of china or glassware and if price tickets are there to tell her how much the articles cost she is not quite a normal woman unless she buys something—or at least is strongly tempted to buy.

From the china counter she perhaps wanders to a display of kitchen hardware. The first thing she knows she has found two or three little utensils that she has been wanting for some time. Seeing them on the counter or table with the everpresent price ticket telling her how much, her kitchen's need is automatically brought to her attention. The outcome may be—and is in many, many cases—that she will wait on herself to the extent of a dollar's worth or more.

We have seen many a dry goods basement store that we should be proud to own were we retailers. Anyway we have seen many things to admire and indorse. But never in one have we seen enough price tickets. Use plenty of price tickets. Spread them on good and thick. You will note the



WINDOW TRIM OF BASEMENT RIBBON, LACE, EMBROIDERY.
(Made By Our Expert Service Department.)

difference in increased business—the very easiest kind of sales that ever blessed a retail store.

The price tickets should be supplemented by a sufficient number of show cards placed over each display and distributed as artistically as possible in various parts of the store. These methods are somewhat louder than you use in your store proper. But this time we are talking about a basement store. And a basement store without a great abundance of price tickets and well gotten-up show cards is a basement store that is being cheated out of a desirable part of its heritage.

As to good housekeeping there probably is not so much to be said to the owner of a store like yours. Good housekeeping in the store means a warfare on dirt, dust and disorder. You without a doubt carry on such a warfare successfully. You of course have learned, either from your experience or from that of others or from your innate knowledge of proper principles of retail selling, that dirt and disorder have no place in the successful store.

But good housekeeping extends farther than this. It means proper attention to dis-

playing goods. Are you sure that this principle of good housekeeping is applied throughout your establishment? If it is, are you sure it is applied to your basement? We have seen basements—in big stores—that were mere catch-all shops. It won't give the best account of itself unless you make it a regular store and run it on that basis.

Another success principle for the basement store is that of well trimmed windows. Of course, you don't have any other kind. Upon your strong and attractive window displays undoubtedly rests a considerable portion of your advertising burden. This is right and proper. But don't forget to give the basement a fair show in your windows. Don't be stingy in this respect with a department that is more at home in windows and can pay bigger returns in windows than any one branch of merchandise you sell. The complaint of many a live basement manager is that he is not given a chance in the windows. What a grievous mistake!

If you have any doubts as to the pulling power of windows, take a walk down past the syndicate 5 and 10 cent store. What is it that gives this store big crowds at any hour in the day? You never see anything in the newspaper about its merchandise. You seldom see even a handbill sent out by this store. Yet it gets the crowds. How?

By windows—windows through which it makes known its merchandise, its Leaders, its values.

Why can't you do the same?

Now, don't throw up your hands in disgust and say that such methods are too loud and too undignified for a store of your standing to utilize. Don't do any scoffing or ridiculing until you have looked into this thing and given it a trial. What we are telling you about window trimming here is one of the strongest fundamental principles of basement store success. Unless you want to work the window end of the deal as it should be worked you may as well make up your mind in advance that the new venture is going to be only a tame affair.

Good windows backed by proper merchandise and methods can make your basement. Only a small window representation or none at all can break the basement.

Let there be no doubt at all in the outset as to the truth of this statement.

Don't force your manager to fight hard for every little window space he gets. Assign him as much space as you can afford, being extra liberal at the start and then increase or decrease it as he can show results.

So highly essential is the window trimming end of a basement store's selling activities that we have devoted considerable space in this booklet to illustrating what we regard as model windows for the average basement store.

Your trimmer will find them useful as giving him some of the very latest ideas on trimming this class of merchandise. He will regard it as a favor if you give him these photographs for his guidance.

Every good trimmer welcomes new ideas. Much of your man's experience having been along dry goods lines, he will be glad to see some of the latest ideas in displaying crockery, china, glassware, tinware and enameled ware and other basement store lines.

The trims in this booklet were made in our Expert Service department by one of the foremost window trimmers of the country. You can use them, therefore, with every confidence in their correctness and up-to-dateness.

To Be or Not to Be

YOU have read in the foregoing chapters that the really successful basement store is the one that actually *is a store.*

This has been proven again and again by the accomplishments of merchants who have conducted a basement business along the right lines and by the discouraging experiences of those who refuse to pay the price for basement store success.

Most dry goods basements win. Some fail. The main cause of the failures is that the department is conducted in a topsy turvy manner. A dealer invests $500 or $1,000 in merchandise without giving any very careful attention to the selection and puts this down in the basement together with a lot of stickers from all over the store. The basement then is treated as a sort of stepchild, which the merchant would much rather be rid of than to have it associate with his other children. He apparently fears that any goods sold away from the regular store and the regular cashier is likely to lead somebody into temptation.

In such cases the manager of the basement usually is some honest maiden aunt or some other relative whose qualification for her important position is that she won't steal.

Being honest enough to keep out of jail is no evidence of a person's ability to sell goods. Naturally under these conditions with no one to push the selling and to see that the right kind of displays are made and that the basement is advertised, the whole thing languishes. If the ad man happens to have a little space to spare maybe he will devote some of it to the basement. Maybe a little representation can be gained in the window from time to time on the same hit or miss basis.

Then, if the basement is not a success, if it is not able to dispose all accumulations of buying mistakes gathered from the other departments the merchant is grieved and thinks he has made a very costly error.

The trouble is not with the basement. It is with the proprietor.

The trouble with such a merchant is that he insists on being 95 per cent perfect in judgment and knowledge and ability to run his own business. He dislikes to admit there is anything relating to a dry goods store or department store he does not know. Even while applying this stepchild treatment to his basement he tries to make himself believe he is giving it a fair chance, but right down in his heart he knows he isn't.

The writer has gone from store to store studying basements and every angle of their problems. He found that basements while they are conducted with a varying degree of success and efficiency are divided into two general classes. The more numerous class is the one where an honest effort is made to conduct a basement on its merits as a regular store. The other is the stepchild kind spoken of above.

Dry goods merchants have discussed the basement store proposition with our sales managers various times while visiting mar-

ket. The sales managers have been obliged to tell some of these men that what they really were after was a mere advertising advantage for their stores and that they would not conduct the basement in the right way to gain the best profits from it. They were told that they would have to apply variety store methods to their basements and run them along the lines we have set forth here. In numerous cases they had to admit the truth of what they were told. But this apparently was a method of meeting a water-tight argument, knowing that they were in the corner and having no other way out. Then these men have gone right back home and conducted their basements in the profitless stepchild manner.

We know what we are talking about when we say the sizable dry goods store can make a notable success of a homegoods basement. We have applied our principle to many a store that was not making good and it immediately showed a surprising increase.

One instance in a big Western city comes to mind right now. The dry goods man was disgusted and said that he had a mind to give away all the merchandise in the basement and board the place up as it was a losing proposition.

One of our men went to his store in an effort to help him. He found disorder rampant in the basement. Two or three girl clerks were standing around talking about last night's party. One man inquired for the manager. One of the girls in a giggling manner directed him over to the corner. There the manager was found eating his lunch! Surely an alluring prospect for any discerning shopper!

Our man told this merchant some very straight truths that got under his hide. When the interview was almost over the dealer was almost on the verge of fighting. But the truth soaked in. The result was that he later got a real manager and gave the basement a real chance. This was five years ago and now that basement is doing a business of more than $60,000 a year when at the time we spoke of it was selling less than $9,000 a year.

If you want to give your basement a fair chance it will be one of the biggest things in your store.

If you don't want to give it a fair chance don't start it.

Let Us Help

WE have tried in this message to set forth the methods of winning with a basement store.

We trust we have helped you.

For the busy man we shall here recapitulate the essential elements of basement store success spoken of on the preceding pages:

You need a basement store to bring you the trade of the masses and therefore the pure cream profits. Make it a real store and not a mere department. Don't hide the entrance. Make your floor layout and your fixtures strictly up to date. Use plenty of price tickets, both in the window and in the basement. Give your basement liberal space in the window and in your printed advertising. Advertise with bargains. Keep your eye on the turn. Watch your profits. Avoid quantity buying. Remember, the watchword of success in a basement store is something new all the time; something doing all the time. Always have a number of prices so low that the people will wonder, and remember this

BASEMENT HOSIERY AND VESTS SHOWN IN WINDOW.
(Trimmed By Our Expert Service Department.)

means that you *must* sell some things under cost. Get a real manager. Make 5, 10 and 25 cent goods the nucleus around which you build your basement stock. Concentrate your 5, 10 and 25 cent goods in a prominent place so that they will stand out. In all your advertising press hard on the trade-bringing powers of the numerals 5, 10 and 25. The usual investment in 5, 10 and 25 cent goods for basement store purposes is from $500 to $5,000. Eight to ten turns a year should be made, paying a gross profit of 30 per cent and a net profit of 10 per cent. The average cost of operating of basement is 18 per cent on sales.

We have endeavored to speak as one having authority in these lines. We have told you that we know all these things and that we know we know them better than anybody else.

At the risk of tiring you are going in this closing chapter to reiterate that we know these things and know we know them.

We do this because we want to impress upon you in the strongest possible way that we want to get behind this basement store enterprise of yours and help you win with it all along the line.

To the Window Trimmer

THE man who trims the windows probably will be interested in a few remarks concerning the technical points of the various window trims illustrated in this book. We are presenting therefore some observations which the trimmer may care to read in connection with his study of the photographs of the various displays.

ENAMELED WARE AND TINWARE WINDOW.

(Page 22)

This window is unusual because it is trimmed largely on homemade fixtures. If you don't care to use your pedestals for displaying this kind of merchandise you can use ordinary boxes. Cover the boxes with tan colored burlap and stencil on them some figure in red. The same figure can be stenciled around the top of the background to form a border. Glass shelves are used on top of the boxes with a very pleasing effect. Enameled ware and tinware, if properly arranged, shows up well in a window. A big display of it is sure to attact attention and pull trade.

KITCHEN HARDWARE WINDOW

(Page 29)

Here is one that will take quite a bit of work on account of the many small pieces to be handled, but the good effect will more than pay you for your trouble. The central feature is the wax figure standing behind a table or kitchen cabinet on which is arranged several every-day utensils. Back of the wax figure is wall paper with a tile effect intended to give the appearance of a kitchen. The various units of small articles you see in this trim are made by attaching the articles to pieces of board covered with red cambric.

ALL THE YEAR TOY WINDOW

(Page 31)

When you make an all the year toy window, try to get a scenic panel with some water in it. This helps in carrying out the play effect. The doll presumably sailing the little boat which is pinned up against the scenic panel makes a pleasing appearance. Note the kites being flown by the teddy bears. The two corner units are made by building up pedestals to the required height and wrapping velvet around them.

CHINA AND GLASSWARE WINDOW

(Page 25)

This very handsome trim is composed mainly of ten-cent items, although some large vases are put in to help bring out a strong effect. Glass shelves on top of neatly covered boxes or pedestals could be used for making the center and two side units. The decorative scheme is helped very much by the three center pieces on the units and the two on the floor. You may not be very enthusiastic over driving nails into your background for the plate hangers. Two for each row would be enough, however. The pleasing result given out by the hanging plates is well worth while.

RIBBON, LACE AND EMBROIDERY WINDOW

(Page 37)

This is a very simple trim yet in its very simplicity there is strength. Three half circular pieces of boards and a few T-stands are all that is necessary for making this display. The idea of putting price tickets on each piece of ribbon may strike you as not being according to Hoyle. If so we suggest that you turn back to pages 36 and 37 and read what we say about price tickets. Always remember that price tickets sell goods.

HOSIERY AND VEST WINDOW

(Page 41)

A strong display was made here by selecting merchandise that was all white and building it up against a solid dark background. The merchandise arranged in this way is so attractive in itself that about the only thing extra required was using a bunch of flowers in each corner at the top. Don't be afraid to devote a whole window to white hosiery and vests. Such a display, large without being overcrowded, is more than likely to have the desired effect.